

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 LUSAKA 1459

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

USUN FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK
SUBJ: RHODESIA: THOUGHTS AND IMPRESSIONS FROM RECENT NEGOTIATIONS

1. SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING ARE PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE
RHODESIA SITUATION FOLLOWING THE TWO RECENT NEGOTIATING ROUNDS:
-- THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IS SHOWING
STRAINS SOONER THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED AND THAT THE INTERNAL
NATIONALISTS' INFLUENCE WITHIN THE TRIBAL TRUST AREAS IS
INSUFFICIENT TO PERMIT THE REGISTRATION AND ELECTION ENVISAGED
IN THE SETTLEMENT.
-- RECENT DISSENSION WITHIN ZAPU AND ZANU DOES NOT REFLECT
ITSELF IMMEDIATELY INSIDE RHODESIA IN WEAKENING PATRIOTIC
FRONT SUPPORT WITHIN THE TRIBAL TRUST AREAS.

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-- SMITH GIVES NO INDICATION OF INTENDING TO GIVE THE INTERNAL
NATIONALISTS SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY OR MODIFYING AUTHORITARIAN
AND DISCRIMINATORY REGULATIONS ENOUGH TO PERMIT THEM TO
LEGITIMIZE THEIR POSITION AND ENCOURAGE SIGNIFICANT POPULAR
SUPPORT. ON THE CONTRARY, HE PROBABLY RECOGNIZES HE CANNOT
RUN AN ELECTION AND WILL HAVE TO PROLONG THE PRESENT SITUA-
TION AND LEADERSHIP.

-- PATRIOTIC FRONT INTRANSIGENCE IS BASED ON ITS BELIEF THAT IT WILL SOONER OR LATER HAVE THINGS ITS OWN WAY. DESPITE PRESENT DISSENSION, THE PF IS STILL CAPABLE OF PURSUING THE WAR, AND ITS LEADERSHIP

HAS NOT BEEN WEAKENED IN ITS RESOLVE.

-- A SOLUTION DEPENDS ON GETTING THREE OF THE GENEVA NATIONALISTS TOGETHER EITHER UNDER THE SALISBURY AGREEMENT OR OUR OWN PROPOSAL IN ITS ORIGINAL OR MODIFIED FORM.

-- IN VIEW OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S ATTITUDE, THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT THAT EITHER OF ITS LEADERS WILL JOIN THE SALISBURY SETTLEMENT. THERE IS THEREFORE MUCH TO BE SAID FOR OUR PUBLISHING OUR PROPOSALS AND FOLLOWING UP ON NYERERE'S SUGGESTIONS TO ATTRACT MUZOREWA TO OUR PROPOSALS. END SUMMARY

2. EVIDENCE IN SALISBURY INDICATES THAT STRAINS AND A FEW CRACKS ARE APPEARING IN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT EARLIER THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED. THE LEVEL OF INTIMIDATION IN THE TRIBAL TRUST AREAS, UNLESS SHARPLY DIMINISHED BY THE RETURNEES/AMNESTY PROGRAM, IS PROBABLY ALREADY SUFFICIENT TO THWART REGISTRATION AND ELECTION. ONE PRESS SOURCE (MCMANUS) CLAIMED MUZOREWA'S PEOPLE WERE, FOR THE FIRST TIME, BEING REJECTED AND EVEN FIRED ON IN SOME TRUST AREAS. ANOTHER (NICK ASHFORD) DESCRIBED OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR THE PF IN A TRIBAL TRUST AREA AND CRITICISM OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND ITS AFRICAN PARTICIPANTS.

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3. THESE INCREASING STRAINS RESULT FROM THE BASIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS AND THE SMITH REGIME AND FROM THE LONG TERM BUILD UP OF PF SUPPORT IN THE TRIBAL TRUST AREAS. SHORTER TERM FLUCTUATIONS IN THE PF MILITARY EFFORT SEEM TO HAVE RELATIVELY LITTLE IMPACT. THAT IS, RECENT BICKERING AND DISORGANIZATION WITHIN ZAPU IN ZAMBIA AND ZANU IN MOZAMBIQUE DO NOT IMMEDIATELY REFLECT THEMSELVES IN RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN TRIBAL TRUST AREAS. THE OPPOSITION TO THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS THERE IS THE RESULT OF PROSELETIZING AND INTIMIDATION CARRIED OUT BY INDOCTRINATED, TRAINED AND EQUIPPED PF MEMBERS OVER A LONG PERIOD. A STEPPED-UP MILITARY THREAT FROM THE PATRIOTIC FRONT DID NOT MATERIALIZE AFTER THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WAS SIGNED AS HAD BEEN EXPECTED. AS PREM CHAND NOTED, THE WET SEASON OFFENSIVE WAS HARDLY VISIBLE AT ALL. THE MILITARY BALANCE MAY BE MORE SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY GRADUAL DETERIORATION ON THE RHODESIAN SIDE THAN BUILD UP FROM THE PF. ANY PROGRESS TOWARDS DISMANTLING SMITH'S AUTHORITARIAN SECURITY STRUCTURE WILL WEAKEN RHODESIAN DEFENSE. MORALE OF THE WHITE FORCES, PARTICULARLY THOSE ON NATIONAL SERVICE, WILL DETERIORATE AS THE SITUATION MOVES TOWARDS MAJORITY AFRICAN RULE.

4. PERHAPS MORE SIGNIFICANT WERE THE INDICATIONS THAT THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS HAD ALREADY OPENED THEIR CAMPAIGNS FOR POPULAR SUPPORT AGAINST EACH OTHER AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. THE NEWLY APPOINTED MINISTER OF JUSTICE BYRON HOVE WAS BUSY MAKING SPEECHES CALLING FOR MODIFICATION OF DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION AND AN END TO POLICE BRUTALITY. SITHOLE TOLD US THAT THE PROTECTED VILLAGES WERE BEING DISMANTLED. THIS IS NOT TRUE. (GAYLARD AMONG OTHERS MADE IT QUITE CLEAR TO ME THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN.) THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT SITHOLE RECOGNIZES HE MUST SUPPORT MOVEMENT IN THIS DIRECTION. I BELIEVE HE WILL SOON CARRY HIS DEMAND TO THE PUBLIC AND WILL BE SERIOUSLY EMBARRASSED IF NO ACTION IS FORTHCOMING.

5. AT THE SAME TIME IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT SMITH WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL

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INTRANSIGENTLY OPPOSED TO MAJOR REFORMS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE. IF HE HAD INTENDED TO MAKE MAJOR CHANGES IN THE AUTHORITARIAN AND DISCRIMINATORY STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT HE WOULD HAVE APPOINTED SUCH

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HARD LINE WHITE MINISTERS AS P.K. VAN DER BYL (FOREIGN AFFAIRS), HILLARY SQUIRES (JUSTICE, LAW AND ORDER) AND HAWKINS (DEFENSE) WHO ARE LITERALLY INCAPABLE OF MEANINGFUL COOPERATION WITH THEIR BLACK COUNTERPART MINISTERS. MORE IMPORTANT, SMITH HAS PUT OFF HIS WHITE REFERENDUM UNTIL SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER--AFTER THE CONSTITUTION IS DRAFTED. THOUGH PEOPLE LIKE GAYLARD SAY SMITH CAN GET ANYTHING HE WANTS APPROVED IN THAT REFERENDUM (AND I AGREE), THERE IS NOT MUCH DOUBT THAT HE WILL USE THE PROSPECT OF THE REFERENDUM TO HOLD THE LINE AGAINST DISMANTLING ANY OF THE AUTHORITARIAN STRUCTURE PROTECTING SECURITY OR THE DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION.

6. BEYOND THIS THERE IS EVIDENCE SMITH KNOWS HE CANNOT CARRY THROUGH ON THE TRANSITION PERIOD AS PROMISED. FROM TWO SEPARATE CONFIDENTIAL

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SOURCES (NUF AND PRESS) COME REPORTS THAT SMITH TOLD A CLOSED MEETING OF RHODESIA FRONT SUPPORTERS TWO WEEKS AGO THAT HE RECOGNIZED IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO HOLD AN ELECTION AS STIPULATED IN THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, HE CLAIMED THAT BY THAT TIME THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS WOULD HAVE BECOME SO ENAMORED OF THEIR GOVERNMENTAL POSITIONS THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT PROLONGATION OF THE INTERIM ADMINISTRATION OR A SIMPLE TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY TO THEM WITHOUT ELECTION.

7. THERE IS ANOTHER PARTICULARLY SUBJECTIVE PIECE OF EVIDENCE. I WAS PERSONALLY STRUCK MORE THAN EVER BEFORE BY SMITH'S PHYSICAL FRAILTY. BEFORE, I HAVE NOTED, AS HAVE OTHERS, THAT HE SEEMED TIRED AND ANXIOUS TO FIND A SOLUTION (ON HIS OWN TERMS). THIS TIME HE SEEMED PHYSICALLY LESS HEALTHY THOUGH HE MAINTAINED HIS CHARACTERISTIC GRUFF ATTITUDE.

8. IT SEEMS APPARENT TO ME THAT THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS WILL INCREASINGLY SEEK TO DEMONSTRATE THE REALITY OF THE AUTHORITY THEY HAVE OBTAINED FROM THEIR SETTLEMENT AND MILITANTLY DISPUTE WITH EACH OTHER THEIR DEMAND FOR CHANGE. THE STRESS WITHIN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WILL BECOME APPARENT TO THE OUTSIDE. THE GROUND THEY WILL DISPUTE HOWEVER BELONGS TO SMITH AND THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT THAT HE INTENDS TO GIVE WAY ON IT (PARA 5). AS A RESULT THEIR POPULAR POSITION IS LIKELY TO WEAKEN. TO COUNTERACT THIS THEY WILL CALL ATTENTION TO THE "SUCCESS" OF THEIR RETURNEES PROGRAM BEING OPERATED ON A POLITICAL PARTY RATHER THAN NATIONAL BASE. THERE IS LIKELY TO BE SOME EXAGGERATION IN THE NUMBERS CLAIMED.

9. AT DAR THE PF MADE LESS MOVEMENT TOWARDS THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL AND AN ALL PARTIES MEETING THAN THE FRONTLINE HAD PROMISED IT WOULD OR WE THOUGHT IT MIGHT. THOUGH WITHOUT HARD EVIDENCE, I BELIEVE THAT IN MUGABE'S CASE THIS WAS IN PART DUE
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TO TONGOGARA'S ABSENCE. THE LATTER MAY HAVE HAD PERSONAL REASONS FOR BEING ABSENT OR FALLEN INTO DISGRACE ALONG WITH OTHERS, BUT I THINK IT MORE LIKELY THAT HE STAYED AWAY TO SHOW HIS DISAPPROVAL OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THUS MUGABE WAS ADDRESSING TONGOGARA RATHER THAN US IN MUCH OF WHAT HE HAD TO SAY. FURTHERMORE, AS ANDY YOUNG LEARNED IN HIS DISCUSSION WITH ZANU REPS, THEY ARE INTENSELY SUSPICIOUS OF NKOMO WHOM THEY SUSPECT AND HOPE WILL SOON DECAAMP TO THE OTHER SIDE LEAVING THEM AS THE REPOSITORY OF SOVIET/CUBAN SUPPORT. (IN THIS ASSUMPTION, THEY ARE PROBABLY MISTAKEN SINCE THE SOVIETS HAVE MADE IT QUITE CLEAR TO US THAT THEY WOULD STICK WITH NKOMO AND ZAPU WHETHER IT REMAINED OUTSIDE OR DECIDED TO JOIN IN A SETTLEMENT.) NKOMO CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS WILL BE UNABLE TO PRODUCE THE CEASEFIRE SMITH REQUIRES AND THAT THE LATTER WILL FINALLY BE FORCED TO COME TO HIM, NKOMO, FOR SETTLEMENT. AS A RESULT, THE TWO PF LEADERS REMAIN OPPOSED TO CONCEDING ANYMORE THAN THEY BELIEVE THEY CAN ULTIMATELY ACHIEVE BY STANDING FIRM. NOR ARE THEY LIKELY TO BECOME MORE MALLEABLE AS THEY SEE THE CRACKS DEVELOPING IN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT.

10. DISSENSION AND FIGHTING WITHIN ZAPU AND ZANU AND BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED RECENTLY, MAY AFFECT THE PF'S ABILITY TO MOUNT A MAJOR OFFENSIVE AND TO PULL EVERYTHING TOGETHER IN THE EVENT IT IS CALLED ON TO GOVERN, BUT WILL HAVE LESS IMPACT ON ITS ABILITY TO MAINTAIN THE STEADY PRESSURE OF INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE INSIDE THE COUNTRY. THAT ABILITY, AS STATED ABOVE, RESULTS FROM TRAINING, EDUCATION AND EQUIPMENT OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS.

11. THE FORMULA FOR A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA IS NOT DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE--SIMPLY STATED IT IS THAT THREE OF THE FOUR GENEVA NATIONALISTS MUST FIND THEMSELVES TOGETHER ON ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER OF THE ZAMBEZI RIVER. THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS
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WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY IMPROVED IF ONE OF THEM WAS AN NDEBELE OR REPRESENTED THEM BUT THIS IS NOT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

12. OF ONE THING WE CAN BE SURE, THE PARTICIPANTS SEE THE

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TRENDS DESCRIBED ABOVE AT LEAST AS CLEARLY AS WE. THOUGH ALWAYS POSSIBLE, IT NEVERTHELESS SEEMS INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY THAT NKOMO WILL AGREE TO JOIN AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WHICH HE SEES AS DOOMED TO FAILURE, DRAMATIZED BY THE GROWING COMPETITION FOR AUTHORITY AMONG THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS.

13. THERE IS ALSO A GOOD PROBABILITY THAT SMITH WILL ALSO RECOGNIZE THE PERILS OF THE SITUATION. HIS RECOURSE COULD BE TO A "QUICK AND DIRTY" REFERENDUM IN THE MARCH 3 SETTLEMENT--A THUMB IN THE INK BOTTLE TYPE OF QUESTION PHRASED IN IRRESISTIBLE TERMS. EVEN THAT HOWEVER WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO BRING OFF. IT WOULD ENTAIL CONSIDERABLE VIOLENCE AND PROBABLY NOT SUCCEED IN ATTRACTING MORE THAN 40-60 PERCENT PARTICIPATION. BUT IT COULD BE DONE.

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14. SUCH A REFERENDUM FOLLOWED BY WHAT WOULD BE REGARDED AS A SHAM TRANSFER OF POWER, WITHOUT AN ELECTION, WOULD OF COURSE FIND LITTLE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

AND WOULD BE STRONGLY RESISTED BY THE PF AND FRONTLINE. THE WAR WOULD CONTINUE AND PROBABLY INTENSIFY. IN AN EFFORT TO WIN POPULAR SUPPORT THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS WOULD BE FORCED TO TAKE MORE AND MORE DEMOGOGIC AND RADICAL POSITIONS. THEY WOULD OF COURSE BE RESTRAINED IN THIS BY THEIR DEPENDENCY ON SMITH'S MILITARY ORGANIZATION.

15. THE ALTERNATIVE TO NKOMO GOING SOUTH IS MUZOREWA TRAVELING NORTH ACROSS THE RIVER. NYERERE HAS INVITED HIM, AND IN HIS RECENT LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER REAFFIRMED HIS WILLINGNESS TO WORK IN THIS DIRECTION. WE SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, BUT WE CAN PRESERVE A PLACE IN THE EVOLVING ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL FOR THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS AND KEEP THEM INFORMED OF OUR DELIBERATIONS AS NYERERE SUGGESTS. THE PROBLEM OF COURSE IS THAT ANY MEETINGS IN SALISBURY MUST PERFORCE BE WITH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL--RELEGATING PRIVATE CONVERSATION TO TEA BREAKS. THEY ARE PROBABLY WORTHWILE EVEN ON THIS BASIS THOUGH A CAREFULLY PREPARED MUZOREWA VISIT TO DAR (SANS DEMONSTRATIONS) WOULD BE MUCH PREFERABLE. IN SIMILAR VEIN, ENCOURAGEMENT TO KAUNDA DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON TO EXTEND AN OLIVE BRANCH TO MUZOREWA COULD BE VERY HELPFUL.

16. IT MIGHT ALSO HELP TO DRAW UP AND PUBLISH OUR PROPOSAL (PERHAPS BOTH IN ORIGINAL AND MODIFIED-BY-DAR FORM) MAKING CLEAR TO ALL THAT THE BRITISH WITH OUR SUPPORT ARE PREPARED TO STAND BY OUR JOINT COMMITMENT TO AN IMPARTIAL TRANSITION PERIOD WHICH GIVES TO MUZOREWA THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSLATE HIS POPULAR SUPPORT INTO POLITICAL POSITION THROUGH AN ELECTION. IT MAY ALSO HELP US DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST DEMANDS BY THE CONFIDENTIAL

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FRONTLINE THAT WE UNDERTAKE FURTHER INITIATIVES TO NEGOTIATE OUR PROPOSAL.

17. THE QUESTION REMAINS OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE PF COULD BE PERSUADED TO PRESERVE A PLACE FOR MUZOREWA AND HE DID CROSS TO THE NORTH SIDE OF THE RIVER. SMITH WOULD STILL REMAIN IN SALISBURY. I BELIEVE AT THAT POINT NKOMO'S PREDICTION WOULD BE REALIZED. SMITH WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT IF HE WANTED AN END TO THE WAR AND ORDERLY TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE HE WOULD HAVE TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE THREE ON THE NORTH BANK EVEN ON THE PF'S TERMS. HIS OWN INCLINATION REINFORMED BY THE INTELLIGENCE REACHING HIM AND ENCOURAGED BY SOUTH AFRICA,

WOULD FORCE HIM IN THIS DIRECTION. FURTHERMORE MODIFICATIONS
IN THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL INCLUDING REDUCTION IN THE
AUTHORITY OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER MAY MAKE IT CONSIDERABLY
MORE ATTRACTIVE TO SMITH. IT IS MY STRONG FEELING THAT THIS
IS THE DIRECTION EVENTS ARE TAKING WHATEVER WE MAY THINK OR
SAY. IF WE CAN SPEED THEM ON THEIR WAY AND ADD OUR AUTHORITY,
THE CHANCES OF A MORE PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY TRANSITION ARE
INCREASED.

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